

## **YOUTH AUTHORITY FACT SHEET**

**July 25, 2000**

### **TWO CYA SCHOOLS ACHIEVE WASC ACCREDITATION**

- California Youth Authority's (CYA) James A. Wieden High School at Preston Youth Correctional Facility in Ione and Karl Holton High School at Karl Holton Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facility in Stockton received six-year terms of accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).
- This is a first in California for correctional high schools. This accreditation for comprehensive high schools is the same rigorous, review process used to accredit public high schools in California.
- WASC is an outside monitoring agency that objectively looks at the total education program and makes a determination as to the acceptability and quality of the overall program, assuring that a facility is operating within the framework of curriculum designed and approved by the State Department of Education. Accreditation assures the public that the school has a clearly defined purpose and appropriate schoolwide learning expectations, goals and objectives.
- Both CYA schools received the longest term of accreditation awarded by WASC--6 years.
- The WASC Accrediting Commission for Schools letter stated, "...this action was taken after careful study of the Visiting Committee Report, which noted many laudable aspects of the school."
- The awarding of accreditation to these two Youth Authority high schools culminates a rigorous three-year, self-study done by both high schools in which the major focus has been on the standards-based curriculum and powerful teaching and learning.
- This achievement is part of a 10-year reform that the Youth Authority has undertaken to make education the center for rehabilitation efforts. This accreditation is an acknowledgement of the partnership within CYA facilities among security and treatment staff, administrators and educators to offer a quality high school education for these incarcerated youth that is equal to or better than the public schools within the communities in which they live.
- The Youth Authority's main objective in seeking accreditation is to 'focus on student learning.' The accreditation self-study, review process will improve the quality of teaching and learning in each of our eleven high schools statewide.
- Accreditation is a major step towards increased community acceptance and will further emphasize and validate CYA's education program.
- The nine other high schools within the Youth Authority have been granted candidacy into the WASC three-year, self-study process.

- CYA's goal is to see every student in the Youth Authority attend a WASC fully accredited high school by July 2002.
- Out of the approximately 6,500 students in CYA high school programs last year, 558 earned diplomas, with an additional 565 completing GED requirements and 29 earning AA degrees.
- The CYA provides institutional training and parole supervision for juvenile and young adult offenders. The department also works with community organizations, local law enforcement and other agencies on gang and drug suppression and delinquency prevention activities.
- The department is responsible for 12,300 juvenile and young adult offenders, with 7,500 in 11 institutions and four conservation camps, and 4,800 on parole. In addition, more than 16,000 crime victims are on record to receive services from the department.